

## Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles.

Seidel, Michael E. 1988. *Trachemys stejnegeri*.

***Trachemys stejnegeri* (Schmidt)  
Central Antillean Slider**

*Pseudemys palustris*: Stejneger, 1904: 710.

*Pseudemys stejnegeri*: Schmidt, 1928:147. Type-locality, "San Juan, Puerto Rico." Holotype, U. S. Natl. Mus. 25642, an adult female, collected on the U. S. Fish Commission Scientific Survey, 1899 (examined by author).

*Pseudemys decussata*: Grant and De Sola, 1934:75.

*Chrysemys decussata*: McDowell, 1964:274.

*Chrysemys stejnegeri*: Bickham and Baker, 1976b:703.

*Chrysemys terrapen*: Obst, 1983:23.

*Trachemys stejnegeri*: Seidel and Inchaustegui, 1984:468. First use of combination.

• **Content.** Three subspecies are recognized: *stejnegeri*, *vicina*, and *malonei*. See Comment.

• **Definition.** The adult carapace is light brown to chestnut, relatively smooth but weakly keeled, and posteriorly serrate. In adults the carapace is usually unmarked except for light bands or faded ocelli on the marginals. In juveniles the pleurals have a dark spot encircled by a yellow or orange ring. The yellow to orange plastron, in all but very old individuals, has a symmetrical, wavy figure. The skin is grayish-brown or grayish-green with pale black-bordered yellow stripes on the head, neck and limbs. The tomium is smooth or slightly serrate and the median ridge of the alveolar surface is weakly developed. The foreclaws of mature males are distinctly elongate, the snout is relatively long, and melanism is pronounced in old individuals. The size is moderate (carapace length: males 105-210 mm, females 110-280 mm).

• **Diagnosis.** *Trachemys stejnegeri* is distinguished from its congeners by the following combination of characteristics: supratemporal stripe deep or dark red; symmetrical figure of connecting lines on adult plastron; ventral surface of plastron frequently

convex; epiplastron rounded anteriorly, turned upward and usually constricted at the gular-humeral seams; deep notch at 12th intermarginal seam; snout depth more than 35% of head width; femoral scutes relatively short, less than 11% of carapace length, axillary scutes short, usually less than 14% of carapace length.

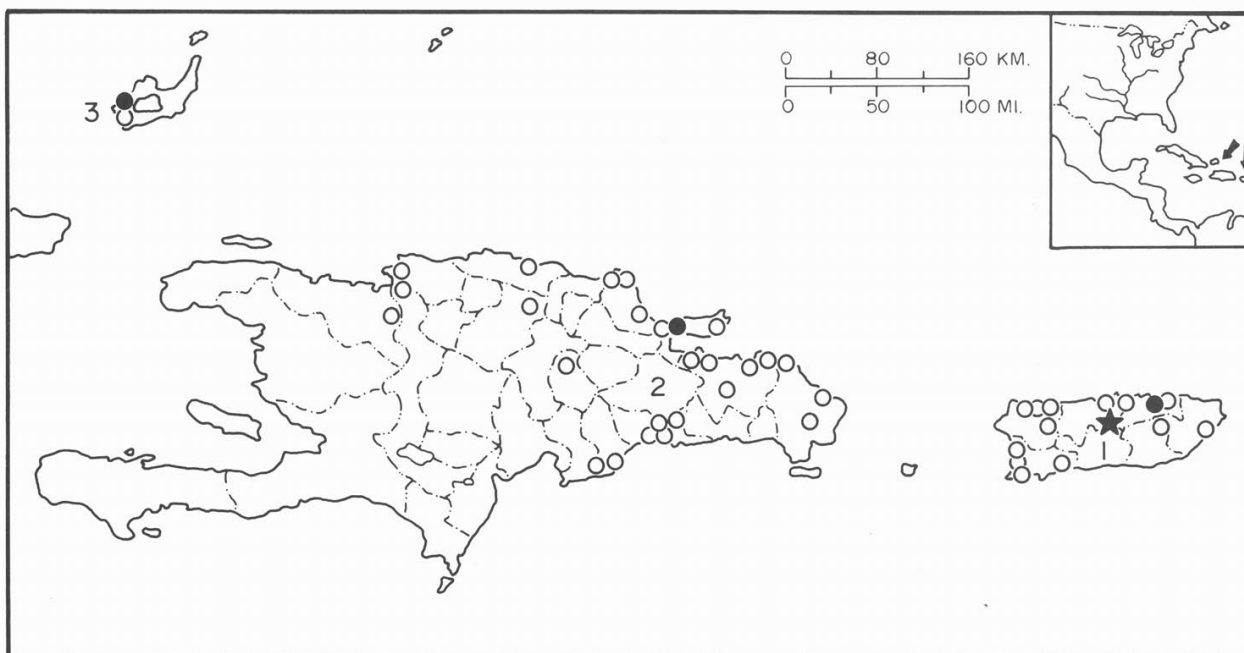
• **Descriptions.** General descriptions are in Barbour and Carr (1940), Inchaustegui (1976), Seidel and Inchaustegui (1984), and Seidel (1988).

• **Illustrations.** Color photographs or drawings are in Barbour and Carr (1940), Rivero (1978), and Pritchard (1979). Black and white photographs or drawings (as *Pseudemys palustris*) are in Stejneger (1904), Cochran (1941), Schmidt (1928), Mertens (1939), Wermuth and Mertens (1961), Inchaustegui (1976), Campbell (1978), Seidel and Inchaustegui (1984), and Seidel (1988). Illustrations of the skull are in Seidel (1988).

• **Distribution.** *Trachemys stejnegeri* occurs on Puerto Rico, northern and eastern Hispaniola, and Great Inagua (Bahamas). It has apparently been introduced on Marie-Galante (Lesser Antilles) and on Vieques and Culebra islands (15 and 30 km E. of Puerto Rico; Seidel, 1988).

• **Fossil Record.** A fossil *T. stejnegeri* has been found in San Miguel Cave, Pleistocene of the Barahona Area, Puerto Rico (Pregill, 1981).

• **Pertinent Literature.** General accounts are in Barbour and Carr (1940), Cochran (1941), and Rivero (1978). Additional references are listed by topic. Taxonomy: Grant (1931), Williams (1956), McDowell (1964), Pritchard (1979), Seidel and Inchaustegui (1984), Seidel and Smith (1986), Seidel and Adkins (1987), and Seidel (1988). Karotype: Bickham and Baker (1976a,b) and Bickham and Carr (1983). Electrophoresis: Seidel and Adkins (1987). Distribution: Barbour and Carr (1938), Seidel and Inchaustegui (1984), Henderson and Schwartz (1984), Iverson (1986), and Seidel (1988). Zoogeography and evolution: Barbour and Carr (1941) and Seidel (1988). Choanal structure: Parsons (1968). Righting reflex: Ashe (1975). Salinity tolerance: Grant and De Sola (1934). Habitat and reproduction: Danforth (1925), Hodsdon and Pearson (1943),



**Map.** Solid circles mark type localities, open circles indicate other records, and the star marks the fossil locality.

Incháustegui (1976), Rivero (1978), and Groombridge (1982).

• **Comment.** Most authors (following Barbour and Carr, 1938) have recognized *malonei* as a monotypic species. However, based on morphological and biochemical evidence, Seidel (1988) relegated *malonei* to a subspecies of *T. stejnegeri*.

Wermuth and Mertens (1961) included *Emys olivacea* Gray 1855:30 in the synonymy of *T. stejnegeri*. Gray's (1855) description is very brief and general (applicable to many emydid species) and the habitat is designated only as "N. America?". BMNH 1947. 3. 4. 10 (adult male, not examined by author) is reportedly Gray's type specimen catalogued as *Pseudemys terrapen stejnegeri* (E. N. Arnold, personal commun.). Regardless of the identity of the type, *Emys olivacea* Gray is invalid (a junior homonym) because Schweigger (1812:307) used this combination for the pleurodiran turtle, *Pe-lomedusa subrufa*.

• **Etymology.** The name *stejnegeri* honors Leonhard Stejneger, former Curator of the Division of Herpetology, United States National Museum; *vicina* (Latin *vicinus* "related or similar") presumably refers to the similarity between turtles of Hispaniola and Puerto Rico; *malonei* honors J. V. Malone, a former commissioner for the islands of Inagua, Bahamas.

### 1. *Trachemys stejnegeri stejnegeri* (Schmidt)

*Trachemys stejnegeri* Schmidt, 1928:147. See species account.  
*Pseudemys palustris stejnegeri*: Mertens, 1939:39.  
*Pseudemys stejnegeri stejnegeri*: Barbour and Carr, 1940:406.  
*Pseudemys terrapen stejnegeri*: Mertens and Wermuth, 1955:367.  
*Pseudemys decussata stejnegeri*: Williams, 1956:157.  
*Chrysemys decussata stejnegeri*: Schwartz and Thomas, 1975:47.  
*Chrysemys terrapen stejnegeri*: Obst, 1983:23.  
*Trachemys stejnegeri stejnegeri*: Iverson, 1985:5. First use of combination.

• **Definition.** The 1st vertebral is relatively short (16% of carapace length) as is the interpectoral seam (14% of carapace length). The axillary scute usually does not contact the 5th submarginal. The supratemporal stripe is distinctly red and the plastron is yellow with a dark symmetrical pattern.

### 2. *Trachemys stejnegeri vicina* (Barbour and Carr)

*Pseudemys stejnegeri vicina*: Barbour and Carr, 1940:408. Type-locality, "Sanchez, San Domingo." Holotype, Field Mus. Natur. Hist. 5977, adult female, collected by Emil Kaempfer, 1924 (examined by author).  
*Pseudemys terrapen vicina*: Mertens and Wermuth, 1955:367.  
*Pseudemys decussata vicina*: Williams, 1956:157.  
*Chrysemys decussata vicina*: Schwartz and Thomas, 1975:48.  
*Chrysemys stejnegeri vicina*: Bickham and Baker, 1976b:703.  
*Pseudemys decorata*: Pritchard, 1979:125.  
*Chrysemys terrapen vicina*: Obst, 1983:23.  
*Trachemys stejnegeri vicina*: Seidel and Incháustegui, 1984:468. First use of combination.

• **Definition.** The 1st vertebral is broad anteriorly (15% of carapace length in males and 16% in females) and relatively long (17-18% of carapace length) as is the interpectoral seam (17-18% of carapace length). The axillary scute is usually in contact with the 5th submarginal and the carapace is relatively shallow (37% of length in males, 39% in females).

### 3. *Trachemys stejnegeri malonei* (Barbour and Carr)

*Pseudemys malonei* Barbour and Carr, 1938:76. Type-locality, "...ponds near Northwest Point, Great Inagua Island, B. W. I." Holotype, Mus. Comp. Zool., Harvard 44338, adult female, collected by Malone, McLean, and Shreve, July, 1938 (examined

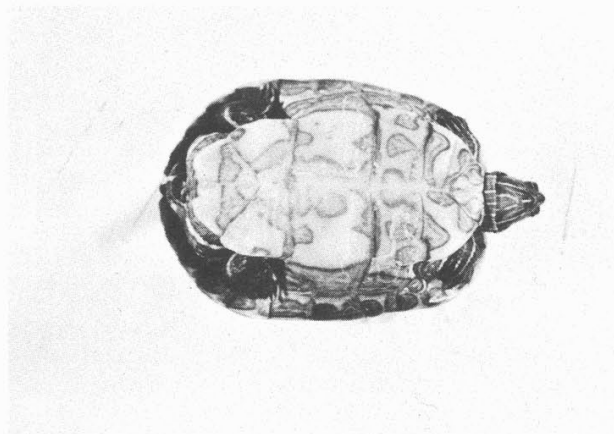
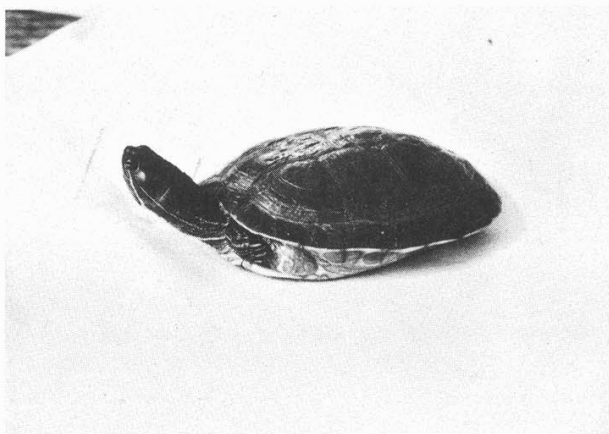
by author).

*Pseudemys palustris malonei*: Mertens, 1939:39.  
*Pseudemys terrapen malonei*: Mertens and Wermuth, 1955:367.  
*Chrysemys malonei*: Schwartz, 1968:260.  
*Chrysemys terrapen malonei*: Obst, 1983:23.  
*Trachemys stejnegeri malonei*: Iverson, 1985:5. First use of combination.  
*Trachemys malonei*: Seidel and Adkins, 1987:485.

• **Definition.** The 1st vertebral is narrow anteriorly (12% of carapace length in males, 13% in females) and relatively long (17-18% of carapace length) as is the interpectoral seam length (17-18% of carapace length). The axillary scute is usually in contact with the 5th submarginal and the carapace is relatively deep (39% of length in males, 43% in females). The supratemporal stripe is dark red or maroon and the plastron is pale yellow with a dark symmetrical pattern.

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**Figure.** Dorsolateral (left) and plastral view of a young female *Trachemys stejnegeri stejnegeri* from Isabela, Puerto Rico.

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